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Transformation: A Continuous Process



The 2006 Systems and Software Technology Conference and this month's issue of CROSSTALK have as their theme "Transforming: Business, Security, Warfighting." Transformation is not just the current buzzword: Many industries and the military have realized that through the investment of transformation efforts, they can strategically posture themselves for the future.

A.K. Cebrowski, the Director of the Office of Transformation for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, stated, "Over the long term, our security and prospects for peace and stability for much of the rest of the world depend on the success of our transformation." Today, our military faces an ever-growing number of emerging security threats. The conflicts are varied – spread out over the globe, continuous, and longer lasting. We are moving from threat-based to capabilities-based planning. The focus is on effects required – not the number of targets destroyed.

Benjamin Franklin stated, "When you're finished changing, you're finished." Clearly, a poignant thought that we must always continue to change, develop, and improve. Transformation is a continuous process, not an end point. It has conceptual, cultural, organizational, and technological dimensions. Being transformational implies that we must continually adapt to a changing environment and that we be innovative, adaptive, and responsive. We have to be easy to do business with. We have to be effective and efficient.

Transformation requires that leaders be prepared for change, and that we invest in new technologies. Leaders have to encourage new ways of thinking; sometimes this includes using old capabilities in new ways. Gen. Richard B. Myers, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said, "In today's world, there ought to be a premium for people who are thinking, innovative, and are willing to take appropriate risks. If you don't try, and you stay locked in the doctrine that brought you there, you're going to fail."

The featured articles in this issue of CROSSTALK develop many valuable concepts to transform our business practices. These articles certainly offer concepts for more agile business practices, and better cost and performance results: Great information to help us all strategically posture ourselves for the future.

Bob Zwitch

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